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10 March 1960

Educational Specialist/OTR

Intermediate Writing Workshop

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NO CHANGE in Class. ☐
☐ DECLASSIFIED
Class. CHANGED TO: TS S (C)
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I. INTRODUCTION

The writer of this memorandum monitored "Intermediate Writing Workshop" from 8 February through 3 March 1960 as a result of a request from the Chief, Intelligence School dated 28 May 1959.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVE

"To stimulate habits of thoughtful, self-critical writing for intelligence production."

III. GENERAL INFORMATION

There were a total of ten students in this class, ranging in GS levels from 7 through 14, with the majority at GS-12. The students came from the following components: DD/P-1, DD/I-5, and DD/S-4. Seven students indicated on their "green sheets" bachelor degrees or more, two claimed work beyond the high school level, and one claimed only high school graduation. Most of the students had been with the Agency quite a few years and the range varied from one year, seven months to twelve years, eleven months, with the average about six years. The class met for nine three-hour morning sessions with a total of 27 hours over a period of four weeks.

IV. STRENGTHS

Mention should be made of the following:

1. There was no published course schedule. Presumably this was to allow flexibility of content directed specifically to the needs of the students.
2. Variation of student activity, involving writing and editing with some related analyzing and critiquing.
3. Use of a screening test to determine the capability of the student to enter this particular level workshop.
4. Feedback of results to the students is as rapid as

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possible consistent with this type of work and class scheduling. Moreover, it is directly pertinent to each student's own work.

5. The instructor has a very charming personality as reflected in her conduct of classroom activities and in dealing with the students.

V. SUGGESTIONS

The following suggestions are made with the intent that they will contribute to some degree in the improvement of instruction and student learning. They should not be read nor interpreted as any official demand upon the Chief Instructor to implement them. In fact, due to the present method of conducting this course, most of these suggestions are minor in nature. Further, they have been discussed with the Chief Instructor prior to being placed in this memorandum.

1. This course should be expanded to approximately 40 hours duration. It is a "skill" training course and, in order to develop any desirable proficiency level, more training time is highly desirable with repetition and practice experiences under the close supervision and guidance of the instructor. Scheduling of such an expanded course is outlined in Suggestion #2 below.

2. Consideration should be given to the possibilities of conducting this course for, perhaps, one and a half to two weeks maximum still on a part-time basis. As this is primarily a "skill training" involving extensive practical work, part-time scheduling is acceptable since full-time attendance and work would be very fatiguing to the student. Scheduling the course over a four-week span, possibly acts as a detrimental factor and may cause, among other things, conflict among some personnel in their need to attend other courses conducted simultaneously, even to the point of preventing potential students from enrolling in this course. This suggestion is proffered with the full consideration of such factors as: feedback procedures and time required for grading of student work; desire for students to immediately apply their learnings to their office writings; and the like.

3. The course, as presently constituted, should be revised in one of two possible ways:

a. Student enrollment should be limited to DD/I personnel and the writing experiences made pertinent to their job needs; or

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b. Student enrollment should include personnel from all components and the subject matter of the writing exercises made pertinent to their across-the-board job needs.

The course objectives state in part "... writing for intelligence production." This class, which was reasonably typical of others, had only 50 percent of its personnel from DD/I. Practically all of the written exercises related directly to OCI reports or other similar types of writings. It is anticipated that 50 percent of the class will not be required to perform such writings in their jobs. Basic writing principles of organization, analysis, and composition apply across-the-board to most type writings. To be most effective; however, the applications of these principles should be taught directly to the type of writings required by the students in their jobs. This would not necessarily preclude an initial experience in OCI writings for the non-DD/I students. If a. above is not practical, then the Chief Instructor should make a definite effort to implement a more extensive variety of writing experiences stated in b.

4. In requiring the students to analyze information and produce a writing outline, it would be more effective if the instructor would initially go through this process with the students, developing visually on the blackboard, the recommended procedures and steps, rather than allowing the students to perform the operation and then subsequently teach the correct procedures. This method would promote specific learnings in contrast to the present procedure in which the instructor develops orally and in general terms, the recommended method of producing a writing outline.

5. It is strongly suggested that the Chief Instructor institute some method of follow-up to the former students. Such a method would be very valuable in ascertaining the degree of effectiveness of this course in meeting the needs of the students. This method would be more than an invitation to the graduates to bring examples of their job writings to the Chief Instructor for guidance and assistance in refining their writings.

6. On all hand-outs for in-class work, the typist should double-space the material or provide ample space after each item in order that the students may accomplish the class work on the same paper.

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7. In conducting class work, the instructor should not make a practice of calling upon in rotation by seating arrangement. This habit does not force each student to be alert on each item being questioned.

8. It might be very worthwhile if CTR could afford to provide each student, for permanent retention, a copy of the suggested textbook, "Handbook For Writers"; Leggett, Mead, and Charvat; Prentice-Hall, Inc., N.J., 1958. This might be made optional on the part of the student dependent upon his estimated need for reference to this book in his job writings.

9. No examinations are given during the course; neither is a final test given. The Chief Instructor bases her evaluation of student effectiveness upon the several practical writing exercises given throughout the course. The "Training Evaluation" (see Attachment A) is so constituted that the Chief Instructor reports the strengths and weaknesses of each student as reflected by the student's class performance. This method appears quite effective in informing the student's supervisor of the student's achievement in this course. (Statement of a fact—not a suggestion.)

10. The instructor might consider attendance, at her convenience, in an Instructional Techniques Course. Even though she has several years of teaching experience to her credit, she might find this course very valuable in assisting her in some of the elements of planning a lesson and the techniques of conducting class sessions.

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Attachment
As stated above

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